

**LADYWOOD WARD FORUM**  
**WEDNESDAY 14 MARCH 2018 AT 7PM**  
**LADYWOOD HEALTH & COMMUNITY CENTRE, ST VINCENT STREET WEST**

Present:- Councillor Kath Hartley in the Chair, Councillor Sir Albert Bore & Councillor Carl Rice

Keith Watson, Principal Development Planning Officer

Craig Rowbottom, Development Planning Manager

Amy Walker & Mike Thomas, Midland Metro Alliance

Sergeant James Ashcroft, West Midlands Police

Ken Brown, Neighbourhood Support & Development Unit

Kay Thomas, Community Governance Manager

There were also approximately 30 residents in attendance

Before the start of the meeting the Chair set out the code of conduct for meetings. She also referred to cards that had been distributed with information on how to report fly tipping and that the last advice bureau would be on 27 April at Ladywood Health & Community Centre.

1. **Notice of Recordings** – noted
2. **Apologies** – Pat Whyte, Richard Girling
3. **Notes of Last Meeting**

Notes were agreed as an accurate record.

A local resident referred to Chamberlain Gardens and that the land had been dedicated by Joseph Chamberlain for a public park for the people of Ladywood and this should be acknowledged in the development of Chamberlain Gardens. Councillor Bore said that he had asked Norman Bartlam to do a piece on Chamberlain Gardens and that could be incorporated. The importance of security and designing out crime in the Park was essential.

4. **Petitions** – none submitted

5. **Edgbaston Reservoir Master Plan – Update**

Keith Watson advised that the draft plan prepared by consultants last year was being re-visited as it had not noted stakeholders input and some important details had been left out. The Master Plan needed to link better with the Greater Icknield development ; water sports and other activities needed priority; toilet and refreshment facilities needed to be included and also how general use by dog walkers etc was to be enhanced. It was intended to give the master plan Statutory Planning status and seek approval by council after the elections and then consult further with residents and groups. A request was made for further discussions on traffic management in view of the congestion on Reservoir Road.

There was some discussion on the effect of the ward boundary changes on the reservoir and Councillor Rice said that councillors would be working together.

Craig Rowbottom advised that housing was a priority for the West Midlands Mayor and that money had been made available for housing, including IPL and some could be used to support the reservoir infrastructure.

In response to questions regarding consultation Councillor Bore explained that Friends of the Reservoir, Sailing Club, TS Vernon and organisations that used the water had met with the consultant initially to ensure that the needs of the water users were known, however the issues raised at this meeting and wider residents groups would be consulted going forward. The meeting was advised that the Friends of the Reservoir would be organising a meeting.

In response to questions regarding the Tower Ballroom Councillor Bore said there had been a lack of consultation with councillors regarding the lease but he understood that legal matters had been resolved and the Tower Ballroom building now belonged to BCC and possession of the lease needed to follow.

With regard to consultation meetings residents asked that they be timed so that people who worked could attend and residents within a certain radius be advised of the meetings as there was considerable interest from people who were not part of a group.

Keith undertook to ensure meetings were arranged in the evening and were held near to the reservoir and involved both wards.

## **6. Icknield Port Loop & Swimming Pool & First Housing Phase – Progress Report**

Craig Rowbottom advised that Urban Splash had been appointed as the developer and planning permission had been granted last year for the first phase of new homes – 117 houses & 90 apartments including public open spaces - and it was hoped to break ground in April. With regard to the new swimming pool initial work was on site and it was hoped to start in April, with a construction time of 18 months anticipated. With regard to the name of the development, feedback from Urban Splash was that 'Icknield' had not been dropped but he would ensure that Urban Splash spoke to councillors about the local value of names.

In response to questions the meeting was advised that the hermetic rubber site had been identified for residential development in the Greater Icknield Master Plan and comments were encouraged. The Chair advised that a planning application had been submitted by the owner of the site for housing however planning advice had been that the plan was too intensive, too high and better access was required. Residents were urged to submit their comments on the application. Whilst the site had been designated for housing and the type of housing could not be dictated it was important that it fit with the rest of the Loop therefore Councillor Hartley had met with the planning officer to put forward the thoughts of local residents.

Residents stated that it was a family area but the plans had not indicated affordable family housing. Also the new properties should not be able to be bought as 'buy to let' as that would change the neighbourhood. Craig Rowbottom said that the housing mix could be influenced. There was some discussion regarding the need for community facilities to support the new housing, in particular a school and the need to protect the historic legacy of the site such as the dam at the reservoir. In response to comments regarding cycling and tow paths Craig advised that some improvements had been made to the towpaths and that it had been agreed that as part of the cycle revolution Northbrook Street down to the canal needed to be better connected. It was noted that the south side of the canal towpath had not been resurfaced and Craig undertook to take that back.

## **7. Metro Project, City Centre**

The Chair referred to maps that had been circulated showing the route of the Edgbaston extension to the metro in response to rumours that the metro was going to be diverted along the Middleway and through maisonettes on Guild Close. The Chair said that the maps clearly showed that the route would not affect properties around Guild Close.

Mike Thomas explained the scheme to be delivered through 2019/20 to be operational in 2021. In response to questions the meeting was advised that when the final scheme was in place private cars would not have access to the full length of Broad Street. Concern was expressed regarding the 'rat run' effect this might have on side roads and residents trying to move around the area. The meeting was advised that most of Sheepcote Street would be 2-way and that the residents associations had been part of the discussions. The consultation was still on-going and comments would be fed into the process.

The Chair said that residents already had to contend with traffic from the NIA travelling through a residential area to access the Middleway, St Mark's estate being particularly affected, and she had to express her reservations about adding more traffic to the area.

Residents suggested Five Ways station be connected for the benefit of commuters.

## **8. Ladywood Living with Hardship Initiative – Update**

Councillor Bore referred to the October meeting when presentations on 2 LIF projects had been received. Councillors took a view on how the £48k allocation should be spent in the ward and after discussion agreed to move forward with the Ladywood Living with Hardship Initiative.

Councillor Bore gave the following update on the project;

- The project was not just tackling homeless/rough sleepers but also looking at hardship issues that could lead to homelessness
- Stakeholders involved with the project - Midland Heart, Trident and Trident Reach, Ladywood Community Project, Inner Circle Credit Union, Ladywood Furniture Project, Suited for Success, Jewellery Quarter & Central Ladywood

Neighbourhood Police Teams. An approach to WMFS was being finalised and City Mission had also been approached.

- Stakeholders had met, agreed aims and objectives and guidelines for the use of the fund.
- Trident was acting as the umbrella organisation and Trident Reach was hosting meetings.
- A number of ideas for funding allocation had come forward including loan guarantee fund, designing out begging
- Ways of bringing in additional funding including the Alternative Giving Fund, were being investigated.
- The scheme was for the people of Ladywood. The City Centre was covered by the Homeless Initiative Team.
- A further update would be provided in the summer on the outcomes.

Sergeant Ashcroft explained that Alternative Giving tackled begging differently by enabling donations to the fund rather than giving cash to homeless individuals. Once the initiative was running businesses would be approached and shown how they could be involved. Councillor Bore said this could also include the local BID's and an approach would be made to the West Midlands Mayor. The police also offered help and support to rough sleepers, using enforcement as a last resort.

In response to questions Councillor Bore said one of the main aims was to design out rough sleeping by tackling root causes such as substance misuse and mental health and as the project developed other partners would be invited to be involved.

Clinton Simmons, Trident, said one of the main issues locally was William Street car park and it was queried if the rough sleepers using the car park could be managed through the project.

Councillor Rice said that the main issues surrounding rough sleepers was substance misuse and mental health and that the root cause needed to be tackled.

## **9. Residents Issues Concerns**

Parking, Reservoir Road – The Chair advised that the TRO would be advertised after the election, to include central Ladywood & St Mark's estate.

Ward Boundary Changes - Residents referred to the changes at the election in May and thanked Councillor Rice for the hard work and commitment shown to the people of Ladywood.

## **10. Authority to Chair & Officers - agreed**

Meeting ended at 9pm